



STATEWIDE TRAINING AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

January 15, 2009 Sacramento, California

	Member	Department	Representing	Present	Absent	Term Exp
1.	Boomgaarden, Marc	Yuba City FD	League of California Cities		X	12/31/10
2.	Childress, Dennis	Orange County FA	SoCal Training Officers	X		12/31/10
3.	Coffman, Dan	CSU Los Angeles	CA Fire Tech Directors	X		12/31/09
4.	Coleman, Ronny	Retired Fire Marshal	Chair	X		---
5.	Jennings, Mary		CFFJAC	X		12/31/10
6.	Martin, Bruce	Fremont FD	CFCA		X	12/31/10
7.	Olson, Kevin	CAL FIRE	CDF	X		12/31/09
8.	Rayon, Howard	Santee FD	CSFA		X	12/31/09
9.	Romer, Mark	Roseville FD	NorCal Training Officers	X		12/31/09
10.	Rooney, Hal	Santa Clara County FD	FDAC	X		12/31/09
11.	Senior, David	Allan Hancock College	CA Fire Tech Directors	X		12/31/10
12.	Thomas, Rich	Newport Beach FD	CPF	X		12/31/10
13.	Wagner, Ken	Roseville FD	CFCA and Vice-chair	X		12/31/09
14.	Zagaris, Kim	OES	OES Fire and Rescue	X		12/31/09
	Alternate	Department	Representing	Present	Absent	Term
1.	Amaral, Brad		NorCal Training Officers		X	12/31/09
2.	Connors, Jim		CA Fire Tech Directors	X		12/31/10
3.	Jennings, Mike	Murrieta FD	SoCal Training Officers	X		12/31/10
4.	Knapp, Chuck		CSFA	X		12/31/09
5.	McCormick, Ron	Fremont FD	NorCal Training Officers		X	12/31/09
6.	Myers, Ron	North Co. Fire Authority	League of California Cities	X		12/31/10
7.	Rickman, Tracy		CA Fire Tech Directors		X	12/31/09
	Staff	Department	Position			
1.	Hamilton, Alicia	OSFM - State Fire Training	Training Specialist	X		
2.	Hoover, Tonya	OSFM	Assitant State Fire Marshal	X		
3.	Miller, Monica	OSFM - State Fire Training	Office Technician	X		
4.	Owen, Christy	OSFM - State Fire Training	Staff Services Manager	X		
5.	Richwine, Mike	OSFM - State Fire Training	Chief	X		
6.	Rodriguez, Ramiro	OSFM - State Fire Training	Deputy State Fire Marshal	X		
7.	Slaughter, Rodney	OSFM - State Fire Training	Deputy State Fire Marshal	X		
8.	Vollenweider, Ken	OSFM - State Fire Training	Deputy State Fire Marshal	X		
	Guests	Department	Representing			
1.	Allen, Leona	Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Acad.				
2.	Bell, Patrick		CalOSHA			
3.	Gerking, Chris	Kings County FD				

4.	Ron Martin	Contra Costa County FPD				
5.	Herzog, Steve	CAL FIRE	CDF			
6.	O'Neill, Tony		ProBoard			
7.	Pearson, Jim	San Bernardino County FD				
8.	Piechota, Fred		ProBoard			
9.	Ridley, Michael		AST, Inc.			
10.	Riviere, Van	Stockton FD				
11.	Roberts, Tony	CAL FIRE	CDF			
12.	Smith, Jess	Glenn County FD	AST, Inc.			
13.	Tollefson, Tennis		Sierra College			
14.	White, Kevin		CFFJAC			

DRAFT

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00a.m. by Chair, Ronny Coleman.

II. Introductions and Welcome

Chair welcomed members and guests, and a quorum was established.

M. Romer & K. Wagner joined the meeting at 9:07a.m.

III. Approval of Minutes

Issue: **Approval of the October 17, 2008 minutes.**

Discussion: C. Owen discovered a typo on Item 6, Driver Operator Curriculum, under “New Business.”

MOTION: *D. Childress moved to accept as amended. K. Wagner seconded the motion.*

Action: *The motion carried unanimously.*

IV. Consent Calendar

Issues: **None Requested**

Discussion: None

MOTION: *None*

Action: *None*

V. Old Business

1. Training Instructor 1A and 1B Class Minimums, Titles, and Instructor Requirements

Issue: **Concerns expressed regarding course requirements**

Discussion: D. Coffman asked that Tennis Tollefson address the committee on concerns expressed by some Fire Technology Directors about the student-to-instructor ratios, as well as with the content of the Instructor 1A and 1B courses. T. Tollefson described the hardship that a 16:1 ratio imposes on some community colleges, due to the increased cost associated with bringing in a second instructor, which may result in making the course more difficult to offer. He proposed that STEAC keep the current 16:1 ratio, and the maximum class size be increased to 32 students. R. Coleman called on State Fire Training (SFT) staff to give their position on the issue. M. Richwine gave the floor to Chief Ron Martin, the taskforce leader of the Instructor 1A and 1B curriculum rewrite cadre and Alicia Hamilton, SFT staff member and party to the curriculum rewrite cadre. A. Hamilton discussed how the original student-to-instructor ratio of 25:1 had been around for years and in order to deliver a class to that many students, according to procedure, it is necessary to involve another Master

Instructor or Qualified Skills Evaluator. The new ratio was put into place in order to keep the course standardized, so whether a class was taken with 8 people or 25 people, the student wouldn't be tasked to perform differently. An increase to 32 students would impact the courses by requiring the presence of 2 instructors throughout the entire duration of the course, and the cadre didn't feel that the 7 extra students would really offset the cost of an additional instructor. R. Martin expressed that the advisory committee's intention was to raise the bar in terms of how Company Officers instruct, and they never deviated from the information shared with STEAC, so he was concerned hearing issues regarding the ratios and content now that the course is being delivered. R. Coleman asked that a motion be made simply to reopen the discussion to address the issues that have recently come to light.

MOTION 1: D. Coffman made the motion to reevaluate previous decisions made by STEAC, regarding instructor ratios and curriculum issues, and reopen them for purposes of discussion. D. Senior seconded the motion.

Action 1: The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: D. Coffman responded to R. Martin and A. Hamilton's comments. He felt that when changes are made, in instances such as the Instructor Series, that people aren't always familiar with the subject, so concerns will usually be heard following these changes when the new policies have had time to take effect. A. Hamilton wanted to make it clear that nothing had been changed, that there was nothing to strike out, because they didn't do away with anything. The previous student maximum was 25 students, and it remains 25 students. The only thing they added was a line suggesting that an instructor would need to enlist help with skills evaluations if there were more than 16 students present. D. Coffman replied that he could not find the language stating anything to that effect when comparing the old policy with the new policy, only that the ratio was 25:1. A. Hamilton reminded him that the committee was given this information when it came before them for action, specifically, because it was going to impact community colleges more than anyone else.

M. Romer expressed that if the committee was going to proceed any further with discussions or decisions regarding the financial burden the class minimums create, that STEAC must be presented some hard numbers by the community colleges to reference. R. Martin assured that the rewrite committee had discussed the issue at length and had taken a position as to the "Achilles' Heel" with the Instructor series, which was holding students accountable to their deliverables. The taskforce was charged with remedying this issue and their conclusion was that, given the time restraints on the curriculum, one instructor could not effectively evaluate or hold students accountable to lesson plan deliverables that meet a certain standard. R. Myers suggested that instead of presuming there is going to be a problem, why not allow the courses to go forward as planned

and come back later with data reflecting the problem, then there would be something with which to work. R. Coleman agreed that numbers need to be presented from an evaluation period to validate and verify the current course of action. It was determined that data and input from community colleges would be needed to establish the evaluation of effectiveness, so reporting responsibilities would go to the Fire Tech Directors.

MOTION 2: *R. Myers made the motion to retain the existing policy for student-to-instructor ratios, evaluate it, and bring it back within one year to review numbers and determine effectiveness. Reporting responsibilities will be that of the Fire Technology Directors. K. Zagaris seconded the motion.*

Action 2: *The motion carried unanimously.*

2. Concerns with Low Angle Rope Rescue Operational (LARRO) Curriculum

Issue: **Presentation by San Bernardino County Fire in support of revisions to current LARRO Curriculum**

Discussion: M. Richwine began by introducing Captain Jim Pearson, a Rescue Systems Instructor with San Bernardino County Fire Department. Captain Pearson was representing his fire department in bringing forward issues of concern they have with the new LARRO Curriculum.

J. Pearson thanked the committee for allowing him to voice his concerns before them. He presented the letter he had addressed to them regarding the issue. Additionally, he passed out a package that included some legal requirements and provisions, as they apply to the instruction of Rescue Systems courses. He then provided a brief background of his own experience and credentials. As a Regional Training Center, their department teaches all the Technical Rescue Disciplines several times annually so he felt that this puts his department very close to the issue. In addition to his expertise in the subject matter, he was also on the Instructor Cadre for the first three rollout courses of the LARRO curriculum when it came out in late 2006.

Next, J. Pearson started on the proposal his department had prepared. He reviewed six points of issue, the first, and in his department's opinion, the most compelling reason for making a revision, being that the LARRO Curriculum does not meet applicable California Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) and Federal OSHA regulations. He went on to provide background and detail regarding this point, including discussions his department has had with Cal OSHA in the past. P. Bell from Cal OSHA was in attendance and provided some clarification on their communication. The second point discussed was that the LARRO curriculum does not meet applicable NFPA Standards (1670). This is because the previous arguments made, regarding curriculum inconsistencies and unsafe practices, indicates that the LARRO curriculum is in contradiction with applicable local, state, and federal laws. Third, J. Pearson argued that the LARRO curriculum does not support rope rescue

evolutions utilizing the OES Light US&R equipment cache. He felt that instead, the rope rescue evolutions discussed in the LARRO text exceed the Governor's OES cache of rope rescue equipment for Light Rescue US&R Companies as listed in Firescope ICS-US&R-120-1, and if following the lessons in the LARRO text, one would be unable to build the rope systems as described/illustrated. The fourth reason given for LARRO revision was that as a prerequisite to Rescue Systems 1, the LARRO curriculum does not prepare students for seamless transition into additional rope rescue training as presented in Rescue System 1 (current and new curricula). This is because the methodology presented in the text was viewed as a complete departure from the established and recognized techniques commonly used throughout California as well as those addressed in the current Rescue Systems 1 curriculum. The fifth point J. Pearson presented was that the LARRO curriculum is regionally based and does not reflect methodology currently recognized by the overwhelming majority of Fire Department rescuers in California. His department felt that the participants of the curriculum rewrite committee did not reflect a geographically diverse cross-section of subject-matter experts throughout California, but rather, included a disproportionate number of representatives from a limited number of regions which could result in regional bias in the development of guidelines and standards within the curriculum. The sixth and final point was simply that the LARRO curriculum is too long. They contended that the additional 3 days of training, as a prerequisite to attending Rescue Systems 1 and other technical rescue courses places a substantial burden on fire departments in the form of back-fill costs. To address the points discussed, San Bernardino County Fire proposed that SFT send out a questionnaire to all registered instructors to see if they agree with the revision proposal and gather feedback from a larger base, then convene another revision committee of 6 active LARRO instructors via conference call or email, to complete the edits and modifications to the text as necessary, eliminating the need for travel and SFT staff time.

C. Hurley expressed that he was in disagreement on all accounts. The program was developed as a very solid coalition of service members representing people from all over the state. The cadre even invited P. Bell to Ione while assembling the systems, discussed various scenarios with him and questioned any compliance issues. He asserted that if there were any disparity between the text and what was approved by CalOSHA, changes were made accordingly. Regions I-VI conducted extensive roll-outs and the material received a great deal of positive feedback. J. Pearson stated that he had read well over 100 views that shared his department's dissension. R. Slaughter suggested that surveying the instructors may be a useful tool in determining the collective assessment of the new curriculum. C. Hurley and V. Riviere spoke in response to J. Pearson's concerns on behalf of the re-write committee, addressing each point presented with counter arguments. P. Bell also reiterated his approval of key points of the curriculum.

MOTION: *M. Romer made the motion to have SFT staff create a survey to send to all registered LARRO instructors, addressing both sides of the issue. A report on the survey results would be due back when STEAC convenes in April. K. Wagner seconded the motion.*

Action: *The motion carried unanimously.*

The committee took a 5-minute break at 10:54 a.m.

3. Update to Chief Officer Certification Training Standards (CTS) (EMS Draft)

Issue: **Update (Information Only)**

Discussion: M. Richwine provided the STEAC members copies of the Chief Officer CTS in their handouts. He recalled that initially, when the CTS went to the State Board of Fire Services (SBFS) for review, they felt that Emergency Medical Services (EMS) should be addressed in the CTS due to the high volume of calls received, nearly 60%, pertaining to EMS. Several EMS division chiefs convened as subject-matter experts and were explained the process and came up with the information presented in this most recent version of the CTS.

MOTION: *None*

Action: *Information only*

4. Fire Control 3 – Vote on Final Draft

Issue: **Presentation of Final Draft & Action**

Discussion: K. Vollenweider shared with the committee that his group believes the final drafts of the Fire Control 3 Course Guides and Position Taskbooks have been polished and were ready to be reviewed for action. He reported that the question was raised as to whether there should be a train-the-trainer session and the feedback they received was in favor of it. He provided the STEAC members copies of the Course Guide and Position Taskbooks and explained that the files for these documents had not yet been posted to the web but if necessary, upon their posting to the web, a conference call could be arranged to discuss any issues that need to be resolved. D. Senior requested that it also be sent to the Fire Tech Directors for feedback as well. The committee was reminded that if adopted, the new course guides and position taskbooks would go into effect May 1, 2009. D. Childress questioned whether the workgroup meant to have the documents posted to the web for constituency review and if they have comments, whether they have an avenue to relay their comments. K. Vollenweider explained that the only issue really being changed was concerning the train-the-trainer sessions. M. Jennings pointed out that STEAC had already seen several drafts of these documents and is aware of any changes that the workgroup has been charged with making in response to their concerns. It was agreed that the STEAC members felt confident enough to take action on the final drafts of the document having been

presented all previous drafts and having been aware of all edits made thereto.

A. Hamilton inquired about the development of future curriculum and how many versions of a document should be brought before STEAC for review, so that numerous drafts are not being presented as frequently. R. Coleman advised the committee that the review of these documents should be done in a 3-step process; a first draft, an administrative draft, and a final draft on which to vote. A. Hamilton volunteered to create a procedural document outlining the process of presenting drafts to STEAC, and will bring it before the committee for action at the April meeting. H. Rooney added that the procedures should also include how revisions are made and who the appropriate person would be to approach with revision concerns. R. Coleman replied that it was going to be on State Fire Training's plate to determine how revisions should be communicated. D. Childress wanted to know when K. Vollenweider anticipated posting the documents to the web and he was assured it would be up the following week.

MOTION: *R. Myers made the motion to adopt the Fire Control 3 Course Guides and Position Taskbooks with the posting of the final documents to the website. M. Jennings seconded the motion.*

Action: *The motion carried unanimously.*

5. Regulations Package Review

Issue: **Update**

Discussion: R. Slaughter explained that he is working on several new regulations packages. The first is a clean-up package from the original regulations submittal, and collectively SFT staff determined that it would be best if each new or updated curriculum, such as Fire Control 3, were submitted as a separate package in that each significantly impacts the Procedures Manual, CIRM, Bookstore order forms, course request forms, etc. This methodology would help keep the regulation process easier to manage.

MOTION: *None*

Action: *Information only*

VI. New Business

1. New Accreditations

Issue: **Consideration of Accreditation for Monterey Peninsula College, Lake Tahoe Community College, and San Jose Fire Department**

Discussion: R. Slaughter informed the committee that he had recently participated in 3 site visits, the reports for which were included in the handouts. The first site he discussed was Monterey Peninsula College (MPC). In addition to R. Slaughter, the accreditation team included Kevin Olson from CAL FIRE and John Sola from the Fire Technology Directors Association. The

team was given an intimate look at the entire program, including the facilities, various equipment and tools, and given time to meet with former Fire Fighter I Academy graduates. R. Slaughter explained that MPC was the first Fire Academy in California and their program has been in existence for quite a while, so he was pleased to hear of their desire to actively participate in the accreditation process. He added that there were absolutely no conditions on the acceptance of MPC into the system as an Accredited Academy as they provide an exemplary model of a regional training program. Concerning best practices, MPC has planned expansion in Parker Flats, taking over the existing facility for Public Safety so they can hold rescue, fire operations, and law enforcement classes, as well as the planned expansion of the CSU, Monterey campus, which is where the Monterey Peninsula Fire College is located. The site team recommended to the committee that Monterey Peninsula College become approved as an Accredited Regional Training Program for 3 years.

MOTION 1: K. Zagaris made the motion to approve Monterey Peninsula College as an Accredited Regional Training Program within the State Fire Training System for the duration of 3 years. Mary Jennings seconded the motion.

Action 1: The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: The second site visit R. Slaughter presented was to Lake Tahoe Community College. The site team for this visit included David Senior from the Fire Technology Directors Association along with Ken Vollenweider and Rodney Slaughter, both representing State Fire Training. He pointed out that this was a new accreditation in Lake Tahoe and as standards dictate, new facilities should not overlap the jurisdiction of other existing facilities, a parameter that Lake Tahoe Community College falls within. Due to its difficult location, R. Slaughter described the necessity of having an accredited facility within the basin to service agencies in and around the lake. In terms of best practices, the site team found that Lake Tahoe Community College has an exceptional program and is one of the only Academies in the state of California to offer an Ice and Swift Water Rescue Course. They also have a notable Sexual Harassment Prevention program and provide job interview training to their students. On behalf of the accreditation team, R. Slaughter recommended that Lake Tahoe Community College become conditionally approved as an Accredited Regional Training Program for one year with the compliance of several conditions. Lake Tahoe Community College would need to adopt the Chancellor's Office, Standard Fire Technology Degree Program including the six core fire science classes, which is currently in the process, and will be voted on by their curriculum committee in February. It would also be necessary for them to appoint a Regional Academy Training Program Coordinator with a minimum of five years of firefighting experience. R. Slaughter introduced Leona Allen, their current Academy Coordinator, and explained that she will be stepping in as the

Administrator for the program, while a fire captain with the required minimum experience assumes the role as Coordinator to meet the approval condition. The program would need to provide fit testing for students if they are expected to train in an IDLH environment, which Lake Tahoe Community College is working to implement. Presently, they are contracting out their fit test. The college is also in the process of adopting the SFT Firefighter I curriculum, adding Company Officer certification classes to their course offerings, and establishing local processing of SFT classes and certificates; all conditions of their approval.

MOTION 2: D. Senior made the motion to conditionally approve Lake Tahoe Community College as an Accredited Regional Training Program within the State Fire Training System for the duration of one year. D. Coffman seconded the motion.

Action 2: The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: The third site visit took place at San Jose Fire Department. R. Slaughter was joined by Hal Rooney, representing the Fire Districts Association of California, John Garza from the Fremont Fire Department, and Ken Vollenwieder of State Fire Training, as the accreditation team for this visit. The team was given a tour of the San Jose training facility, the classrooms, storage facilities and shown all the equipment, tools and apparatus used in their training. It was determined that they had absolutely everything they need to be an academy. There were only 2 conditions which the Department must meet for approval. The first condition was that they need to provide a business plan outlining how they intend to integrate SFT's business processes and local processing into their system, since currently, they are not actually participating. R. Slaughter described a conversation with the department's new training chief who communicated that he and the management were firmly committed to participating fully with the State Fire Training system and that they are currently developing a business plan that is expected to be finalized and submitted within the year. The second condition they will be asked to meet is to provide a copy of the current Firefighter I curriculum their department utilizes, and demonstrate that it is equivalent to, or exceeds, the minimum standards as established by the State Fire Training CIRM manual and Firefighter I curriculum. R. Slaughter felt that the San Jose Fire Department is a credit to the system, which is why he was making an appeal to the committee that they be granted an additional year of accreditation to allow them to incorporate SFT processes and procedures into their program. M. Romer contended that local processing had not been required of Accredited Local Academies and if it is not a requirement, placing contingency upon them to include local processing, which would be a costly expenditure of funds, could be an unnecessary expense. R. Slaughter replied that he and M. Richwine had previously discussed this situation and because State Fire Training's local processing information is currently in flux due to upgrades being made to the database, he is not expecting any of the

Accredited Academies to meet that standard just yet. At present, he is merely informing them that the requirement is imminent and that further down the road, it will become a condition that SFM will be looking at more specifically. R. Martin consulted the SFT Procedures Manual and verified that on page 45, it reads that Local Processing is an option and that the recommendation to Accredited Academies is that they should opt to utilize it. H. Rooney pointed out that the site team had asked what San Jose saw as a benefit of becoming an Accredited Local Academy and their response was that they found local processing beneficial to the agency, but he accepted that it is their option.

MOTION 3: *D. Coffman made the motion to conditionally approve San Jose Fire Academy as an Accredited Local Academy within the State Fire Training System for the duration of one year, with the option to implement local processing. M. Romer seconded the motion.*

Action 3: The motion carried unanimously.

2. Site Accreditation Calendar Review

Issue: **Postponed & Upcoming Accreditations**

Discussion: R. Slaughter provided the committee a quick update regarding L.A. County Fire Department, who had previously been asked to provide a business plan and which, he explained, they had just recently delivered to him. He informed the committee that L.A. County had a new Training Chief and noted that the department had a year from when the committee convened in October, to meet SFM standards.

The next item he discussed was the Accreditation Schedule which was momentarily being put on hold as there were at least 10 or 11 facilities that had postponed their accreditations, and therefore, have been pushed further down the list. He acknowledged that he did have 2 accreditations, complete with self-assessment reports, awaiting approval. The first of these is a new campus, College of the Desert, and the other facility was American River College, situated locally. R. Slaughter was still working on coordinating dates and explained that he has yet to publish a new schedule because he will be extremely busy until June finishing other projects, so besides the two previously mentioned accreditations, the rest will have to be pushed back into the fall. He added that he would email the committee members the new accreditation schedule as soon as it was available.

M. Richwine quickly added that several other entities had expressed interest in being accredited and he thought that it is time to start discussing saturation of academies and whether the committee is going to continue to approve those in reasonable areas.

MOTION: *None*

Action: *Information Only.*

3. University of Nevada- Reno Fire Academy for Flammable-Liquid Fire Fighting

Issue: “National Asset” Academies

Discussion: R. Coleman explained that he is a member of the Advanced Technology Committee for the International Fire Consultants Ltd. (IFC) and as such, he is afforded the opportunity to travel around the country touring top-tier training facilities. In the last six months, he has viewed 7 or 8 facilities that the committee refers to as “National Assets.” The University of Nevada, Reno Fire Science Academy is one such facility that is located in Carlin, Nevada and is home to the University of Nevada-Reno’s Crisis and Emergency Management Institute. His visit was at the request of the facility’s management because recently, the Department of Energy pulled their funding and due to cuts in grant money, it is a possibility that the facility will close, which R. Coleman saw as a huge step backwards for the entire community. The idea of shutting down such a comprehensive facility, he contended, was outrageous and therefore, he had been on a campaign with Gary Reed as well as several others, writing letters of support to reestablish funding. He is trying to get the word out to the California fire service of what an asset this facility truly is.

The Fire Science Academy’s vision is to be a worldwide leader in educating the emergency response and management community, recognized for their safety, quality and client focus. Currently, 50% of their clients are employees for flammable liquid companies such as Exxon, Shell, Standard Oil, etc. The Academy offers what they refer to as “Company Classes,” to people who come to them from outside organizations. They assert in their Mission Statement that they uphold the highest levels of ethical and professional standards and because their clients are experts in their chosen field, they respond by only offering the most competent, current, and innovative facilities and instruction. R. Coleman’s impression was that both their staff and attendees consisted of the highest-level quality individuals, whose work experience covered the gamut from operations in the Alaskan Northern Slope to involvement in such incidents as the Piper Alpha Disaster, off the coast of Scotland. He presented slides with pictures of the facility’s Administration building, Turnout building, classrooms and Staff Residence, which was currently unutilized and being converted to more office buildings. Their water filtration system is extremely complicated, providing recycling of all water on-site; which environmentally speaking, made this site one of the “greenest” in operation. R. Coleman reported that the facility is quite disciplined and has its own fleet as well as very impressive modern pieces of apparatus and training props, including a multi-level replica of an oil refinery and hazardous materials training grounds. On the particular day he visited, there was a fairly large turnout for training on their 70-foot foam fire suppression tank, which costs \$10,000 each time it is ignited. Presently, the facility is involved in the process of receiving federal funding while also applying for grants. R. Coleman concluded his

presentation by offering that there is classroom space available at the facility and if anyone was interested in accessing it, they simply need to contact the Academy.

MOTION: *None*

Action: *Information Only.*

4. Presentation by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications (ProBoard)

Issue: National Accreditation for State Fire Training System

Discussion: R. Coleman started by introducing Anthony O'Neill, Secretary and Treasurer to the ProBoard, and Fredrick Piechota, Accreditation Manager, who both came on behalf of the ProBoard to present an overview of their organization. F. Piechota began by giving the committee some background on the ProBoard. The ProBoard is a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to support fire and emergency services. They respond to a Board of Directors that includes the IAFC, IAAI, NFPA, NASFM, and NAFTD. The ProBoard contracts with the NFPA for accounting and financial services, administrative services for certificate distribution and maintenance of the National Registry, and management of meetings and conferences. The organization is comprised of the Board of Directors, an advisory committee, a committee on accreditation, an accreditation manager, and a program manager.

Next, F. Piechota provided a brief explanation of how their system works. He shared that it has always been the desire of the ProBoard to limit accreditation to state or provincial agencies that have the ability and authority to certify people in their area. Participation in the ProBoard is completely voluntary, but those organizations that choose to participate and are granted accreditation then have the vested ability to delegate as much or as little of their accreditation authority as they feel appropriate to any entity under their umbrella, or as with the case of the State Fire Marshal's Office, to the Accredited Academies. Should the State Fire Marshal's Office seek accreditation through the ProBoard, no other entity, within the respective state or province, will be considered unless there is a real extenuating circumstance that would require it, and even that would be drawn out over a lengthy period of time. If the State Fire Marshal's office ultimately decided to participate, because of their current regulations, the ProBoard would urge CSTI and any other ProBoard accredited entity within California to come under SFM's system as a delegate.

A. O'Neill provided a definition of the terms Accreditation and Certification, as they apply to the ProBoard processes. Accreditation, he explained, is the process of evaluating an agency's qualifications and competency; Qualified Testing Agencies and Institutions are accredited. Certification is the process of documenting the accreditation, that is, qualified people are certified. Concerning the value of accreditation, it

provides third party review and endorsement, recognition and credibility for the program as well as the individual going through the program, assures the most current and sophisticated testing and certification methods, and enables qualified individuals to receive national certificates and entry into the National Registry. It also provides a forum for administrators of training, testing and certification systems to “bench mark” their system and compare their processes and procedures with other accredited institutions, documentation that the individual has met the minimum standard, web-based permanent record in the Certification Registry, and allows portability for those who relocate.

He then described the process of seeking Accreditation through the ProBoard. First, it is necessary for the applicant to prepare a self-study document pertaining to their certification program to submit to the Committee on Accreditation. Once the Committee has reviewed the application and self-study documents, a site visit evaluation will be conducted at the agency’s facilities, after which, an evaluation report will be submitted back to the Committee where they will either approve or disapprove accreditation. The criteria by which agencies will be considered and evaluated are practices that ensure equality, fairness, impartiality, security, and only the highest standards in all areas of training, testing, and certification.

The differences between the ProBoard and IFSAC came into question and A. O’Neill explained that in terms of criteria, the two organizations are basically the same, but they are governed differently. ProBoard operates as a completely self-sufficient non-profit organization, where all funding is applied toward the daily operations. They also conduct accreditation through a committee while IFSAC accredits through a similar organization. A. O’Neill felt that in terms of expeditiously responding to change, the ProBoard is much more capable because IFSAC is a peer-driven group which requires that the entire organization come to a decision on every aspect of their operational procedures. The ProBoard also has no outside funding whereas IFSAC receives outside funding as a function of Oklahoma State University. Instead, the ProBoard plows over 85% of their total revenue back into their operations. They feel they are more flexible in dealing with the needs of the fire service because their basic approach is providing support to those men and women working in the fire service. R. Coleman added that there is a document on their website, www.theproboard.org, that lists more of the differences between the two accrediting organizations.

MOTION: *None*

Action: *Information Only*

5. On-line Hybrid Delivery Issues/Next Steps

Issue: **Resolving Course Approvals & Compatibility Issues**

Discussion: M. Richwine explained to the committee that a work group would need to be formed to address online hybrid delivery issues that were identified during a meeting he had with the Fire Tech Directors. Some of the issues that were discussed involved instructor workshops, security issues and compatibility issues with different platforms used to deliver the course on-line. He asserted that if the committee was intent on continuing in the same direction, the issues would need to be worked out so that it can be made equitable for all the academies and made available on a volunteer basis. One concern that had been relayed was that WebCT and Blackboard are not compatible and, therefore, it has been difficult to verify student identification. He identified that the workgroup would need a Fire Tech Director present as well as some training officers that can assist in developing internal processes that would work for everyone, including platform compatibility and opportunities for instructors to learn. Anyone interested in participating should contact C. Owen. R. Slaughter noted that it needs to be documented in the Procedures Manual that this online hybrid is only being offered through the SFM Accredited Regional Academies and college campuses.

MOTION: *None*

Action: *None*

VII. State Board of Fire Services Report

Issue: **Report on Last Meeting**

Discussion:

MOTION: *None*

Action: *None*

VIII. Announcements

SFT Accomplishments

M. Richwine discussed the accomplishments achieved by State Fire Training over the past year. He provided all the members a handout which listed the achievements and asked the group to share these accomplishments with their constituents, staff, etc.

Change to April STEAC Meeting Date

M. Richwine initially has a conflict with the April meeting date and proposed that the meeting be moved forward by one week to Friday, April 10, 2009. He also mentioned that due to furloughs possibly being enacted, that it be best if future meetings were held on Thursdays rather than Fridays. It was decided that the July and October meetings would maintain the same date until more information on furlough implementation was available.

IX. Roundtable

Discussion: *None*

X. Future Meeting Date

Friday, April 10, 2009

Office of the State Fire Marshal
Sacramento
1131 S Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:52pm by Chair, Ronny Coleman.

DRAFT